

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 03043 231011Z
ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 EUR-12 SP-02 PA-01 H-01
INR-10 IO-13 NSC-05 CIAE-00 /070 W
-----031749 240135Z /63 S

R 230900Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1808
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
ICA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE JIDDA 3043

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, SA, US
SUBJECT: ATHERTON'S TRIP TO MIDDLE EAST

REF: (A) STATE 97555 (B) STATE 97626

1. MESSAGE ABOUT ATHERTON'S TRIP PASSED TO SAUDI FOREIGN
MINISTRY IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS REF A. EMBASSY
MADE POINTS CONTAINED IN PARA 3 OF REF A. REF B ARRIVED AFTER
MESSAGE ALREADY PASSED; THEREFORE NO ACTION TAKEN TO CHANGE
TEXT OF MESSAGE CONVEYED.

2. ATHERTON'S PLANS HAVE RECEIVED PROMINENT COVERAGE IN
LOCAL PRESS AND RADIO. OFFICIAL RADIO STATION COMMENTED
APRIL 18 THAT ISRAELI OBSTINACY WOULD MAKE THIS TRIP FUTILE
EVEN THOUGH PRESIDENT CARTER WAS DOING HIS BEST FOR
RESTORATION OF PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST.

3. FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL IN ARABIC-LANGUAGE OKAZ OF
APRIL 18 SAID THAT THE SUCCESS OF ATHERTON'S TRIP WOULD
DEPEND ON TWO PRINCIPAL ISSUES. FIRST, WHETHER U.S.
TAKES A NEW DIRECTION TO ACHIEVE MIDDLE EAST PEACE, SINCE
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ITS MEDIATOR'S ROLE UNTIL NOW HAD ACHIEVED NOTHING EXCEPT
STATEMENTS WHICH SUPPORT THE ARABS AND CONDEMN ISRAELI
POSITION. SECOND, WHETHER ISRAEL PERSISTS IN SEEKING A
BLESSING FOR OCCUPATION OF ARAB LANDS. THE EDITOR WRITES,
"IT (ISRAEL) TAKES NUMEROUS PATHS, SOMETIMES USING
BIASED AND FATUOUS INTERPRETATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL DECI-
SIONS, SOMETIMES INVENTING PHENOMENA TO SUPPORT THE POLICY

OF MENACHEM BEGIN, AND AT OTHER TIMES MAKING STATEMENTS
TO EXTREME ZIONIST GROUPS ABOUT MAKING NEW COLONIES."

4. THE EDITIRIAL CONCLUDES THAT ATHERTON'S RETURN TO THE
REGION WILL ADD NOTHING NEW TO THE SERIES OF TALKS WHICH
HAVE BEEN HELD DURING THE PAST FEW MONTHS UNLESS HE
CARRIES WITH HIM A DEFINITE POSITION AND PRECTICAL MEA-
SURES TO ACHIEVE PEACE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Draft Date: 23 apr 1978
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TAGS: PEPR, OVIP, SOPN, SA, US, XF, (ATHERTON, ALFRED L)
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